From October 2024

(Volume 176)

Cover Picture

Painting of Camlet Moat (seen on descriptive notice board)

The last days of September gave Lynn and myself an opportunity to park in Trent Park (near the Obelisk) and walk through the woods taking in Camlet Moat and crossing Ferny Hill onto The Enfield Chase. Our object was to see how 'our special trees' have ventured over the seasons. What amazed us were how all the trees we helped planning have really developed and many areas are actually looking like new wooded areas already.

We had planted four oaks a few years ago in 'a special place': One in memory of Arnon, one for Ben, one for David and the last one for Peace. We continued to an area below Botany Bay Farm where we helped to clear rough undergrowth allowing wildlife to access the brook there. We built a 'stumpy' which is a tent-shaped small construction which apparently is an ideal refuge for wild life and stag beetles etc. Despite being overgrown, it was still there. We then went to Oakwood Park to see how the various ponds were coping with the recent heavy rain. We had planted water margin plants and also reeds on coir matting in the centre and despite the top pond being only partially full, the lower, connected, ponds seemed full and were becoming part of the landscape.

It seemed like a well worthwhile afternoon and when I got back Michael sent me a copy of the letter (which was a precis) of my rant about our Green Belt.

I will try to find some 'before' shots to put alongside these latest shots

The Stumpy

Camlet Moat

Nothing is known of the origins of Camlet Moat, but it must have come into existence in some form when Enfield Chase was created as a hunting preserve by Geoffrey de Mandeville around 1140 AD.

The first probable occupant was Richard Pounz, Keeper of the Chase in the 1320s. In 1429 the lodge was demolished and the materials sold to help pay for repairs to Hertford Castle.

Poor quality excavations in the late 1880s and again in 1923 suggested that the lodge was quite substantial, with rubble masonry walls and glazed floor tiles in some rooms.

The name Camlet remains a mystery. It first appears in local records in 1440 AD.

Camlet Moat

Spread across the medieval English landscape there were thousands of modest, rural moated sites, of which Camlet Moat is a fine and well-preserved example. Sites like these were some way down the social scale from castles and big manor houses, and as they tend, visually, to be relatively modest, it was only in the 1960s that archaeologists realised that they form a distinct class of field monument in their own right. Since then, it has been shown that they survive in remarkably large numbers with well over 5,000 having already been identified in England and with new discoveries being made every year. Most date from 1150 – 1500 AD approx.

They vary in size and complexity usually comprising a central platform - rectangular in form, on which was a domestic house often with outbuildings and gardens, partly or completely surrounded by a moat with a flat-bottomed ditch. This could be crossed by bridges, as at Camlet. Excavated timber thought to be from the bridge was dated using dendrochronology, or tree-ring dating, to c.1357.

Their purpose is widely debated but status & prestige seem very likely to be of principal importance although they may have been defensive, ornamental or for drainage and sanitation.

Photo History

Planting near Botany Bay Farm

Jan 2022

Then...

...and now

During the drought July '22

...hard to see any of the tiny plugs..but, honestly, they are there..!!

Oakwood Park

Jan 2022

The boxes of various water margin plants

The new pond and the gully leading into the next one further down

The ponds and scrapes in Oakwood Park are slowly blending into the landscape but there is still a time to go before they naturalise

Planting the four trees at the rest area in Dec '23……

…and so great seeing them mature (in October 2024)

The peaceful beautiful spot we chose for our four trees

Nov '23?

These are the four trees we planted a while back and how they have grown (see inset pictures) It is a lovely spot and they are marked 'A' for Arnon, 'D' for David, 'B' for Ben and 'P' for Peace

We are so lucky having this on our doorstep
(even a small muntjac deer opposite the house)

Sometimes the trees
seem so lifelike

Des

Angela

Michael

Shanti

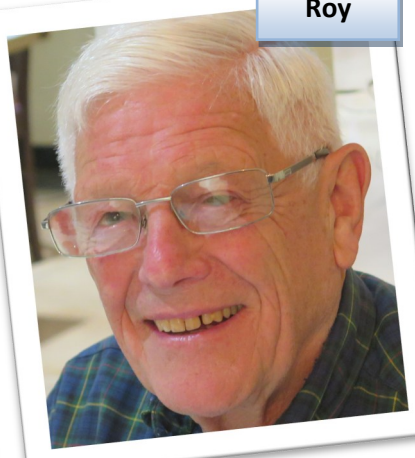
Chris

Ralph

Bob

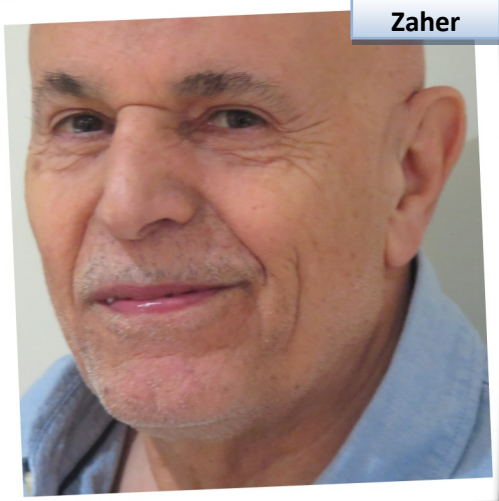
Ruth

Roy



Peter

Zaher



Sue

Redwood's Bistro, Crews Hill, October 2024

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